

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## **An Act To Promote Transparency and Accountability in Campaigns and Governmental Ethics**

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec. 1. 1 MRSA §1012, sub-§4**, as amended by PL 2007, c. 642, §4, is further amended to read:

**4. Gift.** "Gift" means anything of value, including forgiveness of an obligation or debt, given to a person without that person providing equal or greater consideration to the giver. "Gift" does not include:

A. Gifts received from a single source during the reporting period with an aggregate value of \$300 or less;

B. A bequest or other form of inheritance;

C. A gift received from a relative or from an individual on the basis of a personal friendship as long as that individual is not a registered lobbyist or lobbyist associate under Title 3, section 313, unless the Legislator has reason to believe that the gift was provided because of the Legislator's official position and not because of a personal friendship;

D. A subscription to a newspaper, news magazine or other news publication; or

E. Legal services provided in a matter of legislative ethics-;

F. A meal, if the meal is a prayer breakfast or a meal served during a meeting to establish a prayer breakfast; or

G. A meal, if the meal is provided by industry or special interest organizations as part of the informational program presented to a group of public servants.

**Sec. 2. 1 MRSA §1014, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2007, c. 642, §7, is repealed.

**Sec. 3. 1 MRSA §1014, sub-§2-A** is enacted to read:

**2-A. Undue influence.** It is a violation of legislative ethics for a Legislator to engage in conduct that constitutes the exertion of undue influence, including, but not limited to:

A. Appearing for, representing or advocating for another person in a matter before a state agency or authority, for compensation other than compensation as a Legislator, if the Legislator makes reference to that Legislator's legislative capacity, communicates with the agency or authority on legislative stationery or makes threats or implications relating to legislative action;

B. Appearing for, representing or advocating for another person in a matter before a state agency or authority if the Legislator oversees the policies of the agency or authority as a result of the Legislator's committee responsibilities, unless:

(1) The appearance, representation or advocacy is provided without compensation and for the benefit of a constituent;

(2) The Legislator is engaged in the conduct of the Legislator's profession and is in good standing with a licensing board, if any, that oversees the Legislator's profession;

(3) The appearance, representation or advocacy is provided before a court or office of the judicial branch; or

(4) The representation consists of filing records or reports or performing other routine tasks that do not involve the exercise of discretion on the part of the agency or authority; and

C. Representing or assisting another person in the sale of goods or services to the State, a state agency or a state authority, unless the transaction occurs after public notice and competitive bidding.

Effective September 12, 2009